

WELFARE CASELOAD

Description of Indicator

This indicator represents two welfare-related trends: 1) the trend in the total number of families (cases) participating in CalWORKs (CalWORKs provides cash assistance to families and replaces the former federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children, AFDC) and 2) the percentage of cases that have mandatory Welfare-To-Work participants with earnings.

Why is it Important?

Welfare caseload is an important indicator of how overall economic conditions are affecting various income populations in the County and how successfully the County is transitioning persons needing assistance to self-sufficiency.

How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County's CalWORKs caseload is down approximately 43% since fiscal year 1994/95, higher than the statewide reduction of 32% between 1994/95 and 1998/99 and comparable to the nationwide decrease of 46%. The number of CalWORKs families with earnings has risen from 33% to 68% over the same period. Over 35% of the families earn sufficient income to reduce the amount of their grant each month.

CHILD POVERTY

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures percentage of Orange County persons under 18 years of age in poverty. Poverty is defined as persons whose incomes are at or below certain levels, based on family size. For example, the national average poverty threshold for a family of four is \$12,674.

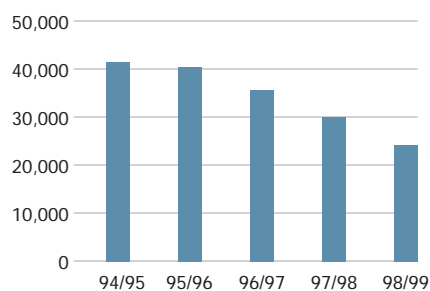
Why is it Important?

Poverty can lead to otherwise preventable health problems, poor performance in school, poor nutrition, and, in critical cases, homelessness.

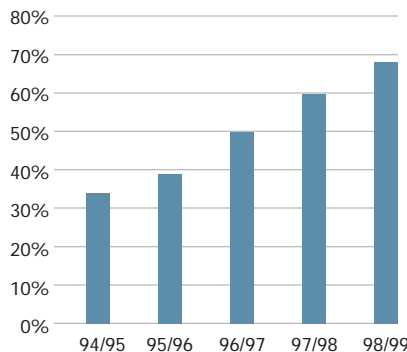
How is Orange County Doing?

Between 1989 and 1995, the percentage of Orange County children in poverty has increased. In 1995, Orange County had a lower rate of children in poverty than most (42) of California's 58 counties.

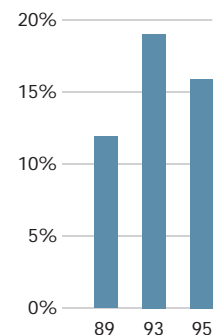
CalWORKs Cases Receiving Assistance - Average Monthly Caseload



Percentage of CalWORKs Cases with Earnings - Fiscal Year Average



Percentage of Orange County Children in Poverty, 1989-1995



Source: Orange County Social Services Agency; U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. (Released by the U.S. Census in 1999, 1995 is the most recent estimate available.)